TEACHING OF SRI SARADA DEVI
THE HOLY MOTHER

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Teaching of Sri Sarada Devi The Holy Mother

1. The Mystery of Life and God-Consciousness

1. Mother: 'The world is the Lord's. He created it for His own play. We are mere pawns in His game. Wherever He keeps us and in whatever way He does so, we have to abide by it contentedly. We suffer as a result of our own actions; it is unfair to blame anybody for it. We have to surrender ourselves completely to the Lord with faith and devotion in Him, serve others to the best of our capacity, and never be a source of sorrow to anybody,'

2. Disciple: 'If there is a God, why is there so much misery in this world? Does He not see? Or hasn't He the power to remove these evils?'

Mother: 'The creation itself is full of griefs. How can one understand joy if there is no sorrow? And how can everyone be happy at the same time? There is a story that once Sita said to Rama, 'Why do you not remove everybody's miseries? Make everyone in your kingdom-all your subjects-happy. You can do it if you like.' Rama answered, 'Can everyone be happy at the same time?' 'Well. They can, if you so desire. Why not satisfy all their needs from the royal treasury?' 'Just as you wish.' 'Then Rama called Lakshmana and said, "Go and tell everyone in my kingdom that all their needs will be supplied from my treasury." When the people heard this, they came and explained their needs. The treasury was laid open. Everyone lived in happiness. But such was the dispensation of Rama that soon the roof of the royal palace showed cracks and water seeped through. Masons were sent for to repair the crack. But there were none to be found. Where was any laborer to be found? The subjects also came and complained that because there were no masons or workmen, their houses and buildings were

falling to pieces. Then, seeing no other way, Sita said to Rama, 'We cannot suffer in the wet like this! Let everything be as it was. Then we can get workmen again. Everybody cannot be happy at the same time.' 'So be it,' answered Rama. In the twinkling of an eye everything was as it used to be. One could get workmen again. 'Lord it is true that this life is only a game of yours!' said Sita. 'No one can suffer for all time. No one will spend all his days on this earth in suffering. Every action brings its own result, and one gets one's opportunities accordingly.'

Disciple: 'Then is everything the fruit of Karma?' Mother: 'What else, if not Karma?'

3. 'Each has to get the results of the actions he earned for this life. A pin at least must prick where a wound from a sword was due,'

4. 'Such is life, here today, gone tomorrow! Nothing goes with one, except one's merit and demerit; good and evil deeds follow one even after death.'

5. 'One suffers as a result of one's own actions. So, instead of blaming others for such sufferings, one should pray to the Lord and depending entirely on His grace, try to bear them patiently and with forbearance under all circumstances.'

6. 'My son, forbearance is a great virtue; there's no other like it.'

7. 'One must be patient like the earth. What iniquities are being perpetrated on her! Yet she quietly endures them all. Man, too, should be like that.'

8. 'There is no treasures equal to contentment and no virtue equal to fortitude,'

9. 'You see, my son, it is not a fact that you will never face dangers. Difficulties always come, but they do not last forever. You will see that they pass away the water under a bridge.'

10. 'Don't be afraid. Human birth is full of suffering and one has to endure everything patiently, taking the Name of God. None, not even God in human form, can escape the sufferings of the body and mind. Even Avataras, saints, and sages have to undergo the ordeal of suffering, for they take upon themselves the burden of sin of omission and commission of ordinary human beings and thereby sacrifice themselves for the good of humanity.'

11. 'People complain about their griefs and sorrows and how they pray to God but find no relief from pain. But grief itself is a gift from God. It is the symbol of His compassion. Tell me, who is there in the world who has not had to bear sorrow? Vrinda once said to Krishna, "Who said you are merciful? As Rama you filled Sita's life with sorrow; as Krishna you fill Radha's life with sorrow. In Kamsa's prison your parents weep for you night and day. Yet we call upon you, because he who takes your Name has no fear of death."'

12. 'The Mother of the universe is the Mother of all. From Her have come out both good and evil.'

13. Disciple: 'Where does this initiative for good and evil originate? You may say from our previous life; but where is the source of it all?'

Mother: 'Even a blade of grass cannot stir without the will of God, my son. When a creature falls on good times, his thoughts turn to prayer; when he falls on bad times, all is evil. It is all according to God's will. It is God alone who expresses His will through the actions of man. What powers did Naren (Swami Vivekananda) have by himself? It was because God acted through him that he achieved what he did. The Lord knows what He is about to perform. But should a man surrender himself totally at His feet, He will do everything for him. One must bear with everything, because it is all due to cause and effect, according to one's Karma. And Karma

counteracts the effects of one's previous Karma. If you do a good act, it cancels the effects of your evil deeds. If one prays, takes the Name of God and thinks of Him, the effects of evil are cancelled.'

14. Disciple: 'If God is the father and mother of all, then why does He make us commit sin?'

Mother: 'No doubt, God alone has become all these objects, animate and inanimate, but in the relative world all beings act and suffer according to their past Karma and innate tendencies. The sun is one, no doubt, but his manifestation differs according to objects and places.'

Disciple: 'If everything happens according to the will of God, then why does He not annul the law of Karma?'

Mother: 'Yes, He wills, He can shorten the period of evolution. But we do not know His will.'

15. 'Let me tell you one thing. There is great complexity in this creation. The Master does one thing through one man and another thing through another person. Oh, it is so inscrutable!'

16. 'Does it matter in the least to God whether you believe or not? Even the sage Suka Deva was to Him like a big ant at the most. Infinite is He. How much can you understand of Him?'

17. 'Pray to God with tears in your eyes whenever you want illumination or find yourself faced with any doubt or difficulty. The Lord will remove all your impurities, assuage your mental anguish, and give you enlightenment.'

18. 'He who thinks always of the Lord, which way can evil come to him?'

19. 'Open your grief-stricken heart to the Lord. Weep and sincerely pray, "O Lord, draw me towards You: give me peace of mind." By doing so constantly you will gradually attain peace of mind.'

20. 'One who makes a habit of prayer will easily overcome all difficulties and remain calm and unruffled in the midst of the trials of life.'

21. 'My child, I bless you from my heart that you live long, attain devotion, and enjoy peace. Peace is the principal thing. One needs peace alone.'

22. 'Certainly you will have doubts. There will be questioning and faith will return again. That is how faith is established.'

23. Is faith so cheap, my child? Faith is the last word. If one has faith, the goal is practically reached.'

24. Does one get faith by mere studying of books? Too much reading creates confusion. The Master used to say that one should learn from the scriptures that God alone is real and the word illusory.'

25. Why do people argue? Even the wisest of men have not found God through argument! Is God a subject for argument?'

26. 'Give up this dry discussion, this hodgepodge of philosophy. Who has been able to know God by reasoning? Even sages like Suka and Vyasa are at best like big ants trying to carry away a few grains of sugar from a large heap.'

27. Disciple: 'How can one stop reasoning?'

Mother: 'Reasoning does not disappear as long as one has not attained to perfect knowledge,'

28. Disciple: 'All I want to know is whether there is anyone whom I may call my own.'

Mother: 'Yes, such a One exists. He Himself has become our father and mother. He Himself brings us up as our parents. It is He alone who looks after us. Otherwise where were you and where are you now? Your parents brought you up, but at last you realized you did not belong to them.'

29. 'God is one's own very own. It is the eternal relationship. He is everyone's own. One realized Him in proportion to the intensity of one's feeling for Him.'

30. 'God cannot be realized without love, Yes, sincere love.'

31. 'Even the impossible becomes possible through devotion.'

32. Disciple: 'How does one get love of God?'

Mother: "The grace of God is the thing that is needful. One should pray for the grace of God.

33. 'If one can regard God as one's own and call on Him without seeing Him, that is God's grace.'

34. 'He who will pray to God eagerly will see Him.'

35. 'If one calls upon Him repeatedly, He becomes compassionate; and so, a devoted attachment comes into being. This love for love's sake should be hidden from all eyes.'

36. 'He who has really prayed to the Master, even once, has nothing to fear. By praying to him constantly one gets ecstatic love (Prema Bhakti) through his grace. This Prema, my child, is the innermost thing of spiritual life. The Gopis of Vrindavan attained to it. They were not aware of anything in the world excepting Sri Krishna. A line in one of Nilakantha's songs says, "One should cherish with great care this precious jewel of Prema."'

37. 'Realization of God cannot be achieved without ecstatic love for Him. Did the cowherd boys of Vrindavan get Sri Krishna as their own through

Japa or meditation? They realized Him through ecstatic love. They used to say to Him, as to an intimate friend, "Come here, O Krishna! Eat this! Take this!"'

38. 'Call on the Lord who pervades the entire universe. He will shower His blessings upon you.'

39. 'What does a man become by realizing God? Does he grow two horns? No, what happens is that he develops discrimination between the real and unreal, obtain spiritual consciousness, and goes beyond life and death. God is realized in spirit. How else can one sees God? Has God talked to anyone who is devoid of spiritual fervor? One envisions God in spirit, talks to Him and establishes a relationship with Him in spirit.'

40. 'In the course of time one does not feel even the existence of God. After attaining enlightenment, one sees that gods and deities are all Maya. Everything comes into existence in time and disappear at the dawn of enlightenment. The aspirant then realizes that the Mother alone pervades the entire universe. All then become one. This is the simple truth.

2

The Spirit of Dispassion

1. 'Listen, dear, when God first created man, He endowed him with the spirit of goodness. As a result, men were born with wisdom and it did not take them long to realize that the world was ephemeral thing. Immediately they took the Name of God and set out to meditate on Him and by His grace were liberated from the bonds of life. God thought, "This will not do; this is not the way to make them play the game of life." In the end, along with the spirit of goodness, He mingled in profuse quantities of the spirit of materialism and that of vanity. Now the game of life went on with a swing!'

2. 'What an illusion Mahamaya has conjured up! Here is this infinite world, and what one claims as his possession will be left behind at death. Still men cannot understand this simple truth.'

3. 'A person may have no relatives anywhere, but Mahamaya may make him keep a cat and thus make him worldly. This is how She plays!'

4. A disciple asked if all men can get rid of desires. Mother replied, 'How can they? If they could, then the creation would come to end. The world is going on because not all can be free of desires. People with desires are born again and again.'

5. 'As long as a man has desires there is no end to his transmigration. It is the desires alone that make him take one body after another. There will be rebirth for a man if he has even the desire to eat a piece of candy. Desire may be compared to a minute seed. It is like a big banyan tree growing out of a seed, which is no bigger than a dot. Rebirth is inevitable so long as one has desires. It is like taking the soul from one pillowcase and

putting it into another. Only one or two out of many men can be found who are free from all desires.'

6. 'The body means the existence of desire, otherwise it would not have existed. It all ends when one no longer has any desires.'

7. 'This world is moving around like a wheel. That indeed is the last birth in which one gets completely rid of all desires.'

8. 'Those who are born to God have fulfilled all their desires. So long as a man has any desires, he is incapable of such devotion.'

9. 'The Master used to say that the worldly person is like a spring mattress - sit on it and it goes down, but the moment you get up, it springs back at once. The regard and devotion for God of these worldly men is just like a drop of water on a hot plate-it evaporates in no time.'

10. Referring to one devotee, Mother said, 'He is so deeply engrossed in worldliness and still he says, "Why do I not see the Master?" Many women used to come to Master and say to him, "Why can't we concentrate our minds upon God? Why can't we steady our minds?" and things like that. He would say to them, "You are like a newborn babe and still smell of the lying-in room. First get rid of that smell. Why are you so worried about realizing God now? Everything will happen in the course of time."'

11. Referring to a man who criticized those who renounce the world, Mother said, 'My child, men such as these are deeply drowned in the world. They never acquire love for God. They simply carry on, "coming into the world, suffering the calamities therein, and going away from it," again and again. If after doing so, many a time, the Lord has mercy on them in some birth, they will attain liberation.'

12. 'How little intelligence does a man possess! He may require one thing, but asks for another. He starts to mold an image of Shiva and often ends by making that of a monkey. It is best therefore to surrender all desires at the feet of God. He will do whatever is best for us. He will do whatever is best for us. One may pray for devotion and detachment. These cannot be classed as desires.'

13. 'In one word, one should desire of God desirelessness. For desire alone is at the root of all suffering. It is the cause of repeated births and deaths. It is the obstacle in the way of liberation.'

14. 'There is no happiness while living in this body. The world is full of sorrow. Happiness is only an empty word. Only those who have received the grace of the Master can recognize him as God, and that is their real joy.'

15. 'What is there in this world? Tell me what is good in this life? That was why in the end the Master took only bitter things. I would try to give him Sandesh and he would say, "What is there in Sandesh? It is just the same as clay."'

16. 'Do you notice this human body? Today it is and tomorrow it is not. And the world is full of misery and pain. Why should one be eager to have another birth? The body is never free from its attendant troubles.'

17. 'However spiritual a man may be, he must pay the tax for the use of the body to the last farthing (i.e. undergo suffering and death incidental to the embodied state). But the difference between a great soul and an ordinary man is this: the latter weeps while leaving this body, whereas the former laughs. Death seems to him mere play.'

18. 'Everything, husband, wife, or even the body, is only illusory. These are all shackle of illusion. Unless you can free yourself from these

bondages, you will never be able to go to the other shore of the world. Even this attachment to the body, must go. What is this body, my darling? It is nothing but three pounds of ashes when it is cremated. Why so much vanity about it? However strong or beautiful this body may be, its culmination is in those three pounds of ashes. And still people are so attached to it. Glory be to God!'

19. 'The whole world is a dream; even this (the waking state) is a dream. What you dreamt last night does not exist now. A farmer who had lost a son dreamt at night that he was a king and the father of eight sons. When the dream vanished, he said to his wife, "Shall I weep for my eight sons or this one?"'

20. 'The happiness of the world is transitory. The less you become attached to the world, the more you enjoy peace of mind.'

21. 'These earthly ties are transitory, today they seem to be the be-all and end-all of life, and tomorrow they vanish. Your real tie is with God.'

22. 'If you love any human being you will have to suffer for it. He is blessed, indeed, who can love God alone. There is no suffering in loving God.'

23. 'Always do your duty to others, but love you must give to God alone. Worldly love always brings in its wake untold misery.'

24. 'The Master saw dabchicks floating, diving and swimming in the water of Haldar's pond, but there would be not a drop of water sticking to them-they would just shake it off. He gave their example and said that in this world one should live like these-live in the midst of worldly possessions, but from one's mind one should completely shake off the attachment for them. The Master used to teach everybody to live in the world completely unattached.'

25. 'Everything is due to desire. What bondage is there for a man who has no desire? You see, I live with all these things, but I do not feel any attachment; no, not in the least.'

26. Disciple: 'Mother, the Master loved renunciation, but how little we practice it!'

Mother: 'Yes you will acquire it slowly. You make some progress in this life, a little more in the next, and so on. It is the body alone that changes; the Atman remains the same. Renunciation of lust and gold! The Master used to say, "I can change Kamarpukur into gold, if I desire, by requesting Mathur Babu to do so; but what good will that do? It is all transitory."'

27. 'Sri Ramakrishna would say, "Musk forms in the navel of the deer. Being fascinated with its smell, the deer run hither and thither. They do not know where the fragrance comes from. Likewise, God resides in the human body, but man does not know if. Therefore, he searches everywhere for bliss, not knowing that it is already in him." God alone is real. All else is false.'

3.

Control of the Mind

1. 'Everything depends on One's mind Nothing can be achieved without purity of mind. Nothing can be achieved without purity of Mind. It is said, "The aspirant may have received the grace of the Guru, the Lord, and the Vaishnava; but he comes to grief without the grace of 'one.'" That "one" is the mind. the mind of the aspirant should be gracious to him.'

2. 'My child, this mind is just like a wild elephant. It races with the wind. Therefore, one should discriminate all the time. One should work hard for the realization of God.'

3. Disciple: 'I cannot concentrate my mind well during meditation. My mind is fickle and unsteady.'

Mother: 'Don't worry! Restlessness is the nature of the mind, as it is of the eyes and ears. Practice regularly. The Name of God is more powerful than the senses. Always think of the Master, who is looking after you. Don't be troubled about your lapse.'

4. 'Whenever the mind goes after anything other then God, consider that as transient and surrender the mind at the sacred feet of the lord.'

5. 'The mind naturally tends towards evil deeds. It is lethargic in doing good works. Formerly I used to get up at 3 a.m. and sit up for meditation. One day I felt disinclined to do so on account of physical indisposition. That one day's irregularity resulted in the upsetting of my routine for a number of days. That is why I say that perseverance and tenacity are necessary for success in all good work.'

6. Mother forbade a disciple to make pilgrimages without discrimination of time and company. Quoting from a song, she said, "Pilgrimage and excursion are causes of misery. Oh, my mind, don't be restless about them. "You can attain more in your house, if you are really earnest.'

7. Regarding weakness of the mind, Holy Mother said to disciple, 'Child, this is the law of nature. Have you not noticed the full moon and the new moon? Likewise, the mind is sometimes dominated by good, and sometimes by bad tendencies.'

8. Disciple: 'Mother, my mind becomes restless now and then. It craves for enjoyments. That frightens me.'

Mother: 'Don't be afraid. I tell you that in this Kali Yuga mental sin is no sin. Free your mind from all worries on this account. You need not be afraid.'

9. 'Can anyone altogether destroy lust? A little of it remains as long one has the body. But it can be subdued, as a snake can be subdued by charmed dust.'

10. Disciple: 'However I may try to remove evil thoughts, I do not succeed.'

Mother: 'This is the result of what you have done in your past life. Can one get rid of it by force? Cultivate good company, try to be good, and in time you will succeed. Pray to the Master. I, too, am here.'

11. 'It is the nature of water to flow downwards, but the sun's rays lift it up towards the sky. Likewise, it is the very nature of mind to go to lower things, to objects of enjoyment, but the grace of God can make the mind go towards higher objects.'

12. Disciple: 'I have been practising religious disciplines. I do not relax my effort in that direction. But it appears that the impurities of mind are not growing less.'

Mother: 'You have rolled different threads on a reel - red, black and white. While unrolling you will see them all exactly in the same way.''

13. Disciple: 'How many insignificant desires crop up in our minds! How can we get rid of them?'

Mother: 'In your case these are no real desires. They are nothing. They are mere facies that appear and disappear in your mind. The more they come and go, the better for you. So long as the ego exists, desires also undoubtedly remain. But those desires will not injure you.'

14. 'Don't puzzle the mind with too many inquiries. One finds it difficult to put one single into practice, but dares invite distraction by filing the mind with too many things.'

15. 'The mind is everything. It is in the mind alone that one feels pure and impure. A man, first of all, must make his own mind guilty and then alone he can see another man's guilt. Does anything ever happen to another if you enumerate his faults? It only injures you.'

16. 'Whenever people discuss good or evil, all those who are present have to take a little share of the good and evil. Suppose someone tells you about his good and evil deeds. Every time you think of that person you must perforce remember his good and evil deeds. In this manner his good and evil deeds both must leave some impression upon you mind.'

17. 'All is in the mind - purity as also impurity, is in the mind.'

18. 'There is evil in your mind. That is why you can't find peace.'

19. 'It is a complex always to be suspecting impurities. The more you emphasize your obsession, the more obsessed you become. It is true of all things.'

20. 'He who has a pure mind sees everything pure.'

21.'On moonlit nights I would look at the moon and pray, "May my mind be pure as the rays of the moon!" or O Lord, there are stains even on the moon, but let my mind be absolutely stainless."'

22. 'When I was at Vrindavan, I used to visit Vankubihari (Krishna in a bend pose) and prayed to him, "Your form is bent, but Your mind is straight-kindly straightening the winding of my mind."'

23. 'Do the Master's work, and along with that practice spiritual disciplines too. Work helps one to keep off idle thoughts. If one is without work, such thoughts rush into one's mind.'

24. 'How can one's mind be healthy if one doesn't work? No one can spend all twenty-four hours in thought and meditation. So, one must engage oneself in work; it keeps the mind cheerful.

25. Alluding to x -, Mother said, 'just see how impure her mind has become through idleness.'

26. Disciple: 'Some say that one achieves nothing through work. One can succeed in spiritual life only through Japa and meditation.'

Mother: 'How have they known as to what will give success and what will not? Does one achieve everything by practicing Japa and meditation for few days? Nothing whatever is achieved unless Mahamaya clears the path. Didn't you notice the other day that a person's brain became deranged because he forced himself to excessive prayer and meditation? If one's head becomes deranged, one's life becomes useless. He intelligence of

a man is very Precarious. It is like the thread of a screw. If one thread is loosened, then he goes crazy. Or he becomes entangled in the trap of Mahamaya and thinks himself to be very intelligent. He feels that he is quite all right. But if the screw is tightened in a different direction, one follows the right path and enjoys peace and happiness. One should always recollect God and pray to Him for right understanding. How many are there who can meditate and practice Japa all the time? At first, they earnestly practice these disciplines, but their brains become heated in the long run by sitting constantly on their prayer rugs. They become very vain. They also suffer from mental worries by reflecting on different things. It is much better to work than to allow the mind to roam at large. For when the mind gets a free scope to wander, it creates much confusion. My Naren thought of these things and wisely founded institution where people would do disinterested work.'

4.

Meditation and Japa

1. 'The mind keeps well when engaged in work. And yet Japa, meditation, prayer also is specially needed. You must at least sit down once in the morning and again in the evening. That acts as a rudder to a boat. When one sits in meditation in the evening, one has done-good or bad-during the whole day. Next one should compare the states of one's mind in the preceding day and the present. Unless you meditate in the mornings and evenings along with work, how can you know what you are actually doing?'

2. 'It us very necessary to have a fixed time for these things. For it cannot be said when the auspicious moment will come. It arrives so suddenly. No one gets any hint of it beforehand. Therefore, one should observe regularity, however busty one may be with duties. Even in the midst of the most intense activity. One should at least remember God and salute Him.'

3. 'May your body and mind become pure by repeating the Name of God!'

4. 'The Mantra purifies the body. Man becomes pure by repeating the Mantra of God. It is said, "The human teacher utters the Mantra into the ear; but God breathes the spirit into the sou."'

5. 'As wind removes the cloud, so the Name of God destroys the cloud of worldliness.'

6. 'Do you know the significance of Japa and other spiritual practices? By these, the power of the sense organs is subdued.'

7. A devotee took a tiny banyan seed and said to Mother, 'Look, Mother, it is tinier even than the tiniest seed we know. From this will spring a

giant tree! How strange!' 'Indeed, it will,' Mother replied. 'See what a tiny seed is the Name of God. From in time come divine moods, devotion, love, and spiritual consummation.'

8. 'Just see the power of habit. By the law of habit man attains realization by continuous practice of Japa.'

9. A devotee asked her, 'Mother, what is the secret?' She pointed to a small timepiece in a niche and said, 'As that timepiece is ticking so also go on repeating God's Name. That will bring everything. Nothing more need be done.'

10. 'One has to suffer the consequences of one's deeds. But by repeating the Name of God, you can lessen its intensity. If you were destined to have a wound as wide as a ploughshare, you will get a pinprick at least. The effect of Karma can be counteracted to a great extent by japa and austerities.'

11. Disciple: 'Suppose I can't do Japa of the Mantra of my chosen Deity?'

Mother: 'What do you mean? You want do Japa of your Mantra? What a suggestion! If you don't do the Japa, you lose; that affects me not in the least!'

12. 'The boys all come and solicit me earnestly for initiation. They get it and depart. But they don't make their Japa regularly - why regularly, some do nothing at all. They take the Mantra with so much sincerity; but why do they not practice at all? Not that it is very hard. If one sticks to a little practice, how much joy comes to one! Ah! With what joy and for how long Jogen (Jogin-Ma) and myself use to make Japa at Vrindavan!'

13. A disciple had written 'I cannot calm my mind and concentrate' and so on. Mother became agitated at these words and said, 'It can be done if

one repeats the Name fifteen or twenty thousand times each day. I have seen actually happen. Let him do that first and talk afterwards if it fails. One must put one's mind to it. But no, no one will do that. They only complain "Why does nothing come of it?"'

14. 'How can one do without Japa and meditation? These have got to be done.'

15. 'The conjunction of day and night is the most auspicious time for calling on God. The mind remains pure at this time.'

16. Disciple: 'I practice Japa, but I cannot concentrate my mind.'

Mother: 'Repeat the Name of God, whether your mind is concentrated or not. It will be good for you if you can repeat the Name of God for a fixed number of times daily.'

19. Mother told X-: 'What is a lot of work I did when I was your age! And yet I could find time to repeat my Mantra a hundred thousand times every day!'

20. Disciple: 'Mother, shall I practice the repetition of the holy Name having in mind a fixed number of repetitions?'

Mother: 'If you repeat with an eye to number, your mind may be concentrated on the number alone. Therefore, I would advise you to repeat the Name of God without being particular about the number.'

21. Once a devotee forgot how to count the repetitions of the Mantra on his fingers. Mother said, 'What does it matter? The purpose of all this is to direct the mind towards God.'

22. 'Repeating the Name of god a fixed number of times, telling the rosary or counting on fingers, is calculated to direct the mind to God. The natural tendency of the mind is to run this way and that way. Through

these means it is attracted to God. While repeating the name of God, if one sees His form and becomes absorbed in Him, one's Japa stops. One gets everything when one succeeds in meditation.'

23. 'While performing Japa, take the Name of God with utmost love, sincerity, and self-surrender. Before commencing your meditation daily, first thing of your utter helplessness in this world and then slowly begin the practice of Sadhana as directed by your Guru.'

24. 'One should meditate on one's chosen Deity as one goes on making Japa. In meditation the face of the chosen Deity of course comes first; but one should meditate on the whole figure, starting from the feet upward.'

25. Disciple: 'Why is it that our mind is not absorbed in God when we repeat His Name?'

Mother: 'It will come about in due course. Even if the mind is not concentrated, do not give up the repetition of the holy Word. You do your duty. While repeating the Name, the mind will get fixed of itself on the ideal, like a candle flame in a place protected from the wind. It is the wind alone that makes the flame flicker. In the same way, our fancies and desires make our mind restless.'

26. Disciple: 'Mother, why is it that the mind does not become steady? When I try to think of God, I find the mind drawn towards other objects.'

Mother: 'It is wrong if the mind is drawn towards secular objects. By "secular objects" is s meant money, family, etc. But it is natural to think of the work in which one is engaged. If meditation is not possible, do Japa. Realization will come through Japa. If the meditative mood comes, well and good, but by no means do it by force."

27. Disciple: 'Is it of any use to be merely repeating His Name without intense devotion?'

Mother: "Whether you jump into water or are pushed into it, your cloth will get drenched. Is it not so? Meditate every day, as your mind is yet immature. Constant meditation will make immature. Constant meditation will make the mind one pointed. Discriminate always between the real and the unreal. Whenever you find your mind drawn to any object, think of it transistorizes, and thus try to withdraw the mind back to the thought of God. A man was angling. A bridal party was going along the road with music. But the angler's eye remained fixed on the float. The mind of a spiritual aspirant should be steadfast like that."

28. 'The mind is by nature restless. Therefore, at the outset, to make the mind steady, one may practice meditation by regulating the breathing a little. That helps to steady the mind. But one must not overdo it. That heats the brain. You may talk of the vision of God, or of meditation, but remember, the mind is everything. One gets everything when the mind becomes steady.'

29. 'If the mind becomes quiet of itself, then what is the need of Pranayama?'

30. Disciple: 'Mother I cannot concentrate my mind in meditation at all,'

Mother: 'It does not matter much. Look at the picture of Sri Ramakrishna, and that will be enough.'

31. When a devotee complained that the impurities of his mind were not being removed in spite of his Japa and meditation, Mother said, 'Through the practice of Japa they will go. How one affords to do without these Practices?'

32. 'In time the mind itself becomes the Guru. To pray to God and meditate on Him for two minutes with full concentration is better than doing so for long hours without if.'

33. 'Repeating the Name of God once, with the mind controlled, is equivalent to a million repetitions with the mind away from God. You may repeat the Name for the whole day, but if the mind is elsewhere, that does not produce much result. The repetition must be accompanied by concentration. Then alone one gets the grace of God.'

34. 'Why should not one have concentration and meditation if the mind is pure? Why should not one sit down for Japa, God's Name will continue rising up from the mind naturally and not with effort.'

35. Disciple: 'I find it impossible to meditate. Please awaken my Kundalini.'

Mother: 'It will awaken in the course of time. Do Japa and meditation. It does not rise of itself. Continuous meditation will make the mind so steady that you will not feel inclined to give it up. When the mind is not in a good mood to meditate, do not force it to do so, in such conditions, get up from the seat of meditation after making prostrations. Real mediation is of a spontaneous nature.'

36. 'The Kundalini will be gradually awakened. You will realize everything by the repetition of God's Name. Even if the mind is not quiet, still you can sit and repeat the holy Name a million times. Before the awakening of the Kundalini, one hears the Anahata sound; but nothing can be achieved without the grace of the Divine Mother.''

37. 'If a person is steady in meditation, he will clearly see the Lord in his heart and hear His voice. The moment an idea flashes in his mind, it will at once he fulfilled and he will be bathed in peace.'

5.

Self-effort and Divine Grace

1. Disciple: 'How does one get the vision of God?'

Mother: 'It is only through His grace. But one must practice meditation and Japa. These remove the impurities of the mind. One must practice spiritual disciplines such as worship and so forth. As one gets the fragrance of a flower by handling it, or as one gets the smell of sandalwood by rubbing it against a stone, in the same way one gets spiritual awakening by constantly thinking of God. But you can realize Him right now if you become desireless.'

2. 'The mind gets purified after hard Tapasya. Without regular practice nothing can be attained.'

3. 'The mind is rendered pure as the result of many austerities. "God who is purity itself cannot be attained without austerities." What else does one obtain by the realization of God? Does he grow two horns? No, his mind becomes pure, and through a pure mind one attains knowledge and spiritual and spiritual awakening.'

4. 'The purpose of initiation is to try to realize God through sincere spiritual effort.'

5. Disciple: 'What is the need of Tapasya?'

Mother: 'It is very necessary. The Master practiced all kinds of disciplines. He used to say, "I have made the mold; now you may cast the image." To cast the image means to meditate and contemplate on the Master, to think of the various incidents of his life. By meditating on him, one gets all the spiritual moods.'

6. 'Spiritual practices are meant to keep the mind steady at the feet of God, to keep it immersed in His thought. Repeat His name.'

7. 'If you practice spiritual discipline for some time in a solitary place, you will find that your mind has become strong, and then you can live in any place or society without being in the least affected by it. When the plant is tender, it should be hedged around. But when it has grown big, not even cows and goats can injure it. Spiritual practices in a solitary place are essential.'

8. 'Sit for meditation in the morning and the evening. Keep your head cool and practice meditation and prayer. It is very difficult to do so. It is rather easy to dig the earth with a spade.'

9. 'Devotees who come nowadays simply keep on saying "Show us God." They have no spiritual practice, no prayer, no austerity - and past sins must be many. These have to be removed step by step, and then only God can be seen. The moon in the sky is covered with clouds; wind blow away the clouds, and then only can you see the moon. Do the clouds scatter away all of a sudden? Exactly the same here. The karmas get exhausted slowly. When God is realized, He illumines the soul internally - knows this internally.'

10. 'My child, you have been extremely fortunate in getting this human birth. Have intense devotion to God. One must work hard. Can one achieve anything without effort? You must devote some time for prayer even in the midst of the busiest hours of the day. I used to be very busy during my days at Dakshineswar; yet I did my prayer and meditation.'

11. 'Prayer and meditation, or pilgrimage, or even earning money, all these should be done during the earlier part of one's life. In old age one's physical and mental strength are weakened. Is that the time for any

struggle? Look at our boys here now, they have turned their minds to God in their youth. This is right, this is the proper time. My son, your prayer and meditations must be accomplished now, in your youth. Do you think you will be able to do anything later? Whatever you may want to do, this is the time for it.'

12. Disciple: 'It is my desire to spend some time in spiritual exercises in the solitude of a garden.'

Mother: 'Quite right. This is the proper time to do so. This is just the proper age for you to undergo these disciplines. You must practice them, but be careful about your food. Swami Yogananda practiced great austerity and as a result suffered much and passed away early in life.'

13. 'The room may contain different kinds of foodstuff, but one must cook them. He who cooks earlier get his meal earlier too. Some eat in the morning, some others in the evening, and there are yet others who fast because they are too lazy to cook. The more intensely a person practices spiritual disciplines, the more quickly he attains God. But even if he does not practice any spiritual discipline, he will attain Him in the end- surely, he will. Only, he who spends his time idly, without practicing prayer and meditation, will take a long time to attain Him.'

14. 'Everything, no doubt, happens by God's will, yet man must work because God expresses His will through man's action. Do not relax your spiritual practices.'

15. Disciple: 'Mother how can I have a perfectly pure heart and love for God?'

Mother: 'All in good time. Now that you have taken refuge with the Master, everything will come to pass. You must pray to the Master.'

16. Advice to a discouraged aspirant: 'You must not think in this way. Are visions everyday things? The Master used to say, "You must cast your line daily, but can you catch a large fish every day? If you wait intently day after day with all your paraphernalia, you may catch a fish someday, or you may not. But don't give up waiting." Pray longer. Cling to what you have found. Say to yourself. "Even If I have no one else, I have a Mother."'

Disciple: 'Mother, why do I not see the Master?'

Mother: 'Continue to pray without losing heart. Everything will happen in time. See how quite a number of munis and rishis could not find Him even after ages of searching, and you want to have Him for the mere asking! Is God vision such an easy thing? But fortunately, the Master has chalked out an easier path this time; therefore, it will be possible for all to realize God.'

18. When a disciple complained about making no spiritual progress, the Mother said to him, 'Suppose you are asleep in Calcutta and someone is removing you with your couch to Banaras. Will you at that time know that you are on your way to Banaras? When you wake up you will be surprised to see where you have come.'

19. Mother: 'One has to sit by the riverside and call on Him. He will ferry across at the proper time.'

Disciple: 'If everything occurs at the proper time, then where is the place for His grace?'

Mother: 'Even so, don't you have to throw your line and wait for the fish when you go angling?'

20. Disciple: 'If God is our own, why then should one sit and wait?'

Mother: 'That is true. It may happen even out of season.'

21. 'God realization can be had at any time by the grace of God, but there is a difference between it and what comes in the fullness of time. '

22. 'Can the mango which ripens out of season be as sweet as the one which ripens in the month of Jyeshta, that is, the proper season? Men are trying to get fruits out of season. But these are not as sweet as those found in the proper season. This is also true of the efforts that lead to God realization. Perhaps you practice some Japa and austerities in this life; in the next life you may intensify the spiritual mood and in the following life you advance further.'

23. Disciple: 'Mother, I have practiced austerities and Japa so much, but I have not achieved anything.'

Mother: 'God is not like fish or vegetables that you can but Him for a price.'

24. 'There is no such rule that the grace of God will fall on one simply because one is practicing austerities. In olden days the rishis practiced austerities for thousands of years with their feet up and head down and a lighted fire burning under them. Even then, only some received the grace of God.'

25. 'Do you know, my child, what it is like? It is just like a candy in the hand of a child. Some people beg the child to part with it. But he does not care to give it to them. Still he easily hands it over to another whom he likes. A man performs severe austerity and spiritual practices throughout his life to realize God. He bestows His grace upon anyone he likes. Grace is the important thing.'

26. Mother: 'God is like a child, you know. He denies some who seek and of Himself gives to some who do not. Perhaps such people had highly

evolved souls from their previous lives. That is why they receive His grace.'

Disciple: 'Then distinctions are made even in the matter of grace?'

Mother: 'Certainly, it is all according to one's Karma. Once the bonds of Karma are sundered, one realizes God.'

Disciple: 'Mother, I admit that spiritual exercise, exhaustion of past Karma, and proper time - all these are factors in the attainment of spiritual knowledge. But If God is our own, why should He not show Himself out of His grace?'

Mother: 'That is right. But who has this faith that He is his own? All take up religion as a matter of form. How many really want God?'

27. 'Be sincere in your practice, words and deeds. You will feel blessed! His blessings are always showered on all creatures on the earth. It is needless to ask for it. Practice meditation sincerely and you will understand His infinite grace. God wants sincerity, truthfulness and love. Outward verbal effusions do not touch Him.'

28. 'How many are there who truly want to realize God? Where is that earnestness? They, no doubt, profess great devotion and longing, but they feel satisfied when they get even a tiny bit of enjoyment. They say, "Ah, how kind is God!"'

29. 'If you don't call upon God indeed many people never even remember Him- what does it matter to Him? It is your own misfortune. Such is the Maya of God, He keeps them ignorant of Him saying, "They are happy enough, let them be so!"'

30. 'Whatever you yearn for, that you will get.'

31. 'My child, this world is like a deep marshy place. Once a man gets entangled there, it becomes very difficult for him to come out. Repeat the Name of God. If you do so, He will cut away your bondage someday. Can anyone get liberation, my child, unless He Himself removes the shackles? Have deep faith in God. Look upon the Master as your refuge, even as children regard their parents.'

32. 'You may say that you have done so much of Japa or so much of work; but nothing will avail. Nobody can achieve anything unless Mahamaya clears the way. Oh, my children, take refuge, just take refuge. Then alone she will clear the way out of her mercy. Once in summer at Kamarpukur, a heavy shower had filled up the fields, and water overflowed from the ponds. The Master was wading through water when proceeding by the side of the sweeper colony. As the catfish came out of the ponds, the people around began to beat and catch them. One of the fish kept swimming near about the Master's feet. So, he said, "Don't you kill this one. See it seeks my protection and plays round. It will be so good if one of you carries it to the Haldar's pond." Then he himself took it up and released it in the pond. Returning home, he said, "Ah, if anyone seeks protection in this way, one is saved."'

33. 'Repeat the Name of God in the innermost core of your heart, and in all sincerity take refuge in the Master. Do not bother to know your mind is reacting to things around. And do not waste time in calculating and worrying whether or not you are progressing in the path of spirituality. It is Ahamkara to judge progress for oneself. Have faith in the grace of your Guru and Ishta.'

34. Disciple: 'There are devotees who surrender themselves to God but do not practice austerities. Will they attain to this state (of realization)?'

Mother: 'That they surrender themselves to God, that they live placing implicit trust in Him, is their spiritual discipline. Naren said, "Let me have millions of births, what do I fear?" It is true. Does a man of knowledge ever fear rebirth? He does not commit any sin. It is the ignorant person who is always seized with fear. He alone gets entangled. He becomes polluted by sin. For millions of births he suffers from endless miseries, he undergoes infinite pains, and at last he craves for God. The calf makes the sound of 'Ham Hai, Ham Hai' (I am, I am). He makes the same sound even after drums and other instruments are made from his hide and entrails. At last he goes into the hand of a carder and then he makes the sound "Tum Hai, Tum Hai" (It is Thou, it is Thou).'

35. 'People suffer endless miseries on account of their egoism and at last say, "Not I, not I; it is Thou, O God! It is Thou!"'

36. Devotee: 'Man cannot do anything by his individual effort. God is doing everything through him.'

Mother: 'Yes, that is true. But is one conscious of this always? Blinded by egoism, people think themselves to be independent agents in regard to action. They do not depend on God. He protects one who relies on Him.'

37. 'As you pray and meditate you will find the Master actually speaking to you, fulfilling all your desires immediately, and your mind will be filled with such deep peace. You will realize that He who is in me, is in you too and in the humblest of men - only then humility will be born in your mind.'

38. 'My child, if you get perfect knowledge through my blessings, then I bless you with all my heart and soul. Is unaided from the clutches of Maya? It was for this that the Master performed spiritual austerities to

the utmost extent and gave the results thereof for the redemption of mankind.'

39. 'The Master used to say, "The way is extremely difficult, like the sharp edge of a razor." But He has kept you in His arms. He is looking after you.'

40. 'Just surrender yourself to Him; you will then feel His grace.'

6.

The Ideal of Renunciation

1. 'You are a living god. Who is able to renounce all for God's sake? Even the injunctions for Destiny are cancelled if one takes refuge in God. Destiny strikes off with her own hand what she has written about such a person.'

2. 'Will a man who has strong desires for worldly pleasures listen to me if I ask him to renounce them? But if a fortunate soul has realized the world to be the sport of Maya and God alone to be real, shall I not help him a little? Is there any end to the suffering in the world?'

3. 'Don't marry, don't enter the world. What do you lose if you don't marry? You are free wherever you may be.'

4. 'An unmarried person who leads a pure life will advance towards Him with rapid strides, whether he prays to Him or not. The others, being tied hand and foot, find it difficult to extricate themselves from the bondage of worldliness, even though they try to think of God.'

5. 'What is there in the worldly life? What an inordinate attachment people have for it. See how out of one so many come out, and how one's attention and energies are all dissipated. Is it possible for a person placed under such conditions to attain to spiritual greatness? Have you not seen crabs? The mother crab peeps out of her hole again and again, and then goes down. It struggles hard repeatedly to free itself, but fails. And why? Because of her attraction for her numerous progenies living in the hole. This attraction drags her into the hole in spite of all her efforts. Such is the case of those who are immersed in worldly life.'

6. The mother of a monk requested Holy Mother to ask her son to go back to worldly life. Mother replied, 'It is a rare good fortune to be the mother

of a monk. People cannot give up attachment even to a brass pot. Is it an easy thing to renounce the world? Why should you worry?'

7. About a boy who wanted to embrace monastic life and was being encouraged by Swami Shivananda to do so, Mother said, 'One needs good fortune, indeed, to accept the ideal of renunciation taught by the Master. Tarak (Swami Sivananda) is right. How few can be rescued from the world once they are entangled in it! The boy has real strength of mind.'

8. A woman devotee requested Holy Mother to order her daughter to marry. Mother replied, 'Is it not misery to remain in lifelong slavery to another and always dance to his tune? Though there is some risk in being a celibate, still, if one is not inclined to lead a married life, one should not be forced into it and subjected to lifelong worldliness. Those girls that are drawn to the ideal of complete renunciation should be encouraged to lead a celibate life.'

9. When someone criticized Holy Mother for giving a disciple the ochre robe, she replied, 'Look here, child, they are children of light. They live on this earth as pure as flowers. Can you tell me anything happier that this? You have seen for yourself what kind of happiness worldly life can give. What have you learned from me all these days! Why so much attraction for worldly life? Why so much animal propensity? What sort of happiness to you derive from it? Can you not even conceive in dream a pure ideal of life? Can't you live with your husband even now as brother and sister? Why this desire to lead a piggish life? This misery of the world has been gnawing into my bones.'

10. 'He has done very well to become a Sadhu. What is there in this cage of flesh and bones? What is after all in this body? Why should one become enmeshed in this Maya? It will ultimately come to an end after a few days. Then when it is burnt, there will remain only a seer and a half

of ash. Banku has become a Sannyasin, he has taken to the path of God. He has done well indeed!'

11. 'People find opportunities according to their fate and Karma. The fact is, if one's time to go beyond the world is ripe, one will break all bonds and come; nobody will check him. Lack of money, awaiting somebody's approval, fear of having to go back, these are nothing.'

12. 'You see. My dear, many people seek God only after disappointment in other spheres. But he, who from childhood can place at the Master's feet a heart as pure as a flower, is blessed indeed!'

13. 'The other day X- said to me, "Mother we are always to be alert. We always tremble with fear lest we should think any unholy thought." That is very true. A monk is like a bleached cloth. One does not notice the spots in a black cloth so much, but even a drop of ink looks so prominent on white linen. The monk's life is always beset with dangers. The whole world is engrossed in lust and gold. The monk must always practice renunciation and dispassion. Therefore, Sri Ramakrishna use to say, "A monk must always be alert and careful."'

14. 'Sri Ramakrishna used to say, O Sadhu, beware!" Sadhus should always be alert. The path of a Sadhu is always slippery. When one is on slippery ground, one should walk tiptoe. Is it a joke to become a Sannyasin? If one had so desired, one could have married and lived the life of a householder. Now that you have given up such intentions, the mind should not be allowed to think of these things. What has once been spat out, is not eaten again. The ochre robe of a Sadhu protects him the collar of a dog protects in from danger. No one molests a dog with a collar, as it belongs to someone or other. All gates are open to a Sadhu. He has admission everywhere.'

15. Devotee: 'Mother, I am overtaken by fear on seeing how even highly spiritual persons meet with a fall.'

Mother: 'If you are constantly in touch with objects of enjoyment, you are likely to succumb to their influence.

16. At Jayrambati when a young man was initiated into Brahmacharya, he asked, 'How long will I have to fulfill its vows.' Mother answered him at once with a firm voice, 'As long as there is life in your body.'

17. 'Faith and firmness are the basic things; if faith and firmness are there, then you have it all.'

18. 'Forgetting your personality, try to understand your identity with God.'

19. 'It is extremely bad for a monk to possess money. There is nothing impossible for the round pieces to do - even to the extent of endangering life.'

20. To a disciple who had been busy with accounts the whole day, Mother said, 'Can anyone who has renounced the world relish these things? Once there was a mistake in the accounts relating to the salary of the Master. I asked him to talk to the manager of the Temple about it. But he said, "What a shame! Shall I bother myself about accounts?" Once he said to me, "He who utters the Name of God never suffers from any misery. Why do you worry?" These are his very words. Renunciation was his ornament.'

21. 'What is there in wealth, my dear? The Master could not bear even to touch money. His hand would twist away. He would say, "The world itself is unreal. Look here, if I believed that this world is real, I would gild the whole of Kamarpukur with real gold before I go. But I know all that is unreal and God alone is real."'

22. ‘Only people who have renounced the world can resist the temptation of wealth.’

23. ‘My dear child, even the tinkling of the coins produces greed in the minds of the needy - such is the power of money.’

24. ‘Money always taints the mind. Such is the fascination of money that if you involve yourself too much in it, you will feel attracted to it. You may think that you are above money and that you will never feel any attraction for it as you have once renounced it. You may further think that at any moment you may leave it behind. No, my child, never harbor this thought in your mind. Through a tiny little loophole, it will enter into your mind and then strangle you gradually quite undetected. You will never know it. Sri Ramakrishna could never bear the touch of money. Always remember his words. Money is at the root of all the disasters you see in the world. Money may lure one’s mind into other temptations. Beware!’

25. ‘A monk must not lower the ideal of renunciation. Even if a wooden image of a woman lies upside down in the road. He must not turn it the other way, even with his foot, to look at its face.’

26. ‘A monk should be above attachment and jealousy. He must be same under all circumstances. Sri Ramakrishna use to say to Hriday, “You must bear with me and I must bear with you; then everything will go on well. Otherwise we shall have to summon the manager to make up our differences.”’

28. ‘A monk should not visit his home. Meeting his people revives old memories. He must forget these, even his very body. Then only he can have a vision of God.’

29. ‘Who is one’s father or one’s mother? God is all.’

30. 'A monk once came to the Panchavati. In the beginning he had no attachments. But alas, in the end he began to store away things like a mouse- utensils, pitchers, grain and everything. The Master noticed it and said one day, "Poor thing. This will be the end of him!" He was about to be entangled in the snare of Maya. The Master advised him strongly about renunciation and asked him to leave the place. Then he went away.'

31. Mother scolded a Swami because he was showing undue love for the ashrama: 'You have renounced the world to repeat God's name. But now you are involved in activities. The ashrama has become your second world. People come to the monastery, giving up their families, but they became so attached to the monastery that they do not want to give it up. "A man eager to keep away from acid food builds a home under a tamarind tree!""

32. 'Whenever you go on some work, make it a point to return as soon as it is finished. In this life you will find that in digging for earthworms we often go deeper and bring out snakes.'

33. To a woman disciple who was to lead an exclusive spiritual life: 'Never be intimate with any man - not even your own father or brother. What to speak of other then! Let me again repeat, don't be intimate with any man, even if God comes to you in that form.'

34. To a woman in an ochre robe, who said she had not been initiated, Mother said, 'Without initiation, and without any spiritual realization, you have put on this sacred robe. This is not proper for you. The robe you have put on is very holy. I was about to salute you with folded hands. All will bow down at your feet. You must acquire the power to assimilate the honor.'

35. Disciple: 'Mother the monastic life begets terrible vanity.'

Mother: 'Yes that is true. A monk may become very vain. He may think, "See he does not respect me. He does not bow down before me," and so on. (Pointing to her own white cloth), One should rather live thus (meaning possessed of inner renunciation). Is it possible, my child to get rid of vanity - vanity of beauty, vanity of virtue, vanity of knowledge and vanity of holy life?'

36. Disciple: 'Mother, all your children are learned, but these beings (referring to the inmates of the Koalpara Ashrama) are your illiterate children. Sarat Maharaj has written books and your other children are giving lectures. So much is being done to spread Sri Ramakrishna's ideas.'

Mother: 'What do you mean? Our Master did not know much of reading and writing. The real thing is devotion to God. Through you much work will be done in this part of the country. The Master was born on earth this time to liberate all, the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate. The Malaya breeze is blowing here. He who will unfurl his sail and take refuge in the Master will be blessed indeed. Why should you be worried? You are my own people. But remember this, that an educated Sadhu is like an elephant whose tusks are covered with gold.'

37. A disciple who had renounced the world visited Mother at Jayrambati and then went on to Hrishikesh. Just a few days later he wrote, "Mother, you told me that in time I would see the Master, but why have I not done so?' Mother listened to the letter and said, 'Go write to him that just because he has gone to Hrishikesh, the Master will not be waiting for him there. He has become a monk; what should he do now but call upon God? He will appear when He wishes.'

38. 'It is a monk's duty to call on God. The monk cannot complain that God vision is denied him in spite of hard struggle. God will reveal Himself at His will. He is not at anybody's beck and call.'

39. Disciple: 'What is the aim of life?'

Mother: 'To realize God and remain immersed in His contemplation. You are Sannyasins, you are His own. He takes care of your spiritual welfare both here and hereafter. What then is there for you to worry about? Is it possible to contemplate on God always? Sometimes work; at other times think of God. Always discriminate between the real and the unreal.'

40. The Master will be your protector. It will be a heinous sin on the part of the Master if he does not protect those who have taken shelter at his feet, who have taken refuge in him renouncing all, and who want to lead a good life. You must live in a spirit of self-surrender to him. Let him do good to you if he so desires, or let him drown you if that be his will. But you are to do only what is righteous, and that also according to the power he has given you.'

7.

Advice to Householders

1. 'Those who belong to a very high plane of existence alone can take to the monastic life and free themselves from all bondages. Again, there are some who are born to have a little taste of this worldly life. I say that one should see through worldly enjoyments. Let X-marry and finish all enjoyment in this life; otherwise there is no knowing when he may fall a victim to some unfulfilled desire. But you may be sure of this, that so long as he remains under the Master's protection he can never slip.'

2. When a young man, out of temporary dispassion, expressed unwillingness to marry, Mother said, 'How is that? God has created things in pairs: two eyes, two ears, two legs - and likewise, man and woman.'

3. To someone hesitant about marriage, Mother said, 'Why can't one lead a good life if one is married? The mind alone is everything. Did not the Master marry me?'

4. One disciple said to Mother that he had tried to lead an unmarried life, but now found it impossible to remain a celibate. Mother gave him assurance and said, 'Don't be afraid to marry. Sri Ramakrishna had many householder disciples. Go and marry. Don't worry.'

5. To sincere lay disciples who spoke of envying monastic life, Mother would say, 'Is the ochre robe everything? You will realize 'God without it. What is the need of taking the ochre robe?'

6. Disciple: 'The Master said that those who would accept him as their spiritual ideal would not be born again. Again, Swamiji said that no liberation is possible without being initiated into Sannyasa. What, then, will be the way out for the householders?'

Mother: 'Yes, what the Master said is true and what Swamiji said is also equally true. The householders have no need of external renunciation. They will spontaneously get internal renunciation. But some people need external renunciation. Why should you be afraid? Surrender yourself to the Master and always remember that he stands behind.'

7. 'Spiritual progress becomes easier If husband and wife agree in their views regarding spiritual practices.'

8. Disciple: 'The scriptures declare that in the service of her husband a woman may find divine beatitude and union with the Divine. If a woman tries to lead a life of self-control by pleading and reasoning with her husband somewhat against his wishes, is that a sin?'

Mother: 'If it is for the sake of God, then it is no sin. One must control the senses.'

9. 'Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "One must practice self-control after the birth of one or two children."'

10. Regarding family people who wanted to renounce worldly life, Mother said, 'If you really want to give up, first make suitable arrangements for the subsistence of your dependents.'

11. Regarding earning money and accumulating it, Mother said, 'You have Your wife and children. You should lay by something for them. What you have to consider, my boy, is that if you put by something, there will be some provision for your family and the future. Besides, you will be able to serve the holy men too. If you have nothing, what will you give to the holy men, my dear?'

12. 'My child, whatever one is, if he comes in the garb of a Sannyasin, you do "Sadhu Seva" (service to holy people) by offering him something or serving him in some way.'

13. Regarding a devote who wanted to purchase Mother an expensive cloth, she said, if he will brook no disappointment and wants to spend the money, let him buy a piece of land whereby the Sadhus and the devotees will be served.'

14. 'The rich should serve God and His devotees with money, and the poor worship God by repeating His Name.'

15. To a young householder devotee who had spoken somewhat disrespectfully to a Sannyasin, Mother said, 'Be careful about these three things: first, a house situated on the bank of a river; at any time, the river may destroy that house and sweep it away in its current. Second, a snake; you must be very careful when you see one, for there is no knowing when it will come and bite you. Third, a Sadhu; you don't know that one word or one thought of his may injure a householder. Whenever you see a Sadhu, you should show him respect. You should show him respect. You should not show him disrespect by retorts or slighting remarks.'

16. To householders concerning their duties in the world, Mother said, 'The household is the Lord's, and so in whatever work He has placed you, you should, depending entirely upon Him, do your best to perform it well. If sorrows and troubles assail you, call on the Master and he will show you the way.'

8.

Love and Compassion

1. 'I tell you one thing-if you want peace, do not find fault with others. Rather see your own faults with others. Rather see your own faults. Learn to make the world your own. No one is a stranger, my child; the whole world is your own.'

2. 'To err is human. One must not take that into account. It is harmful for oneself. One gets into the habit of finding fault. Do not look for faults in others, or your own eyes will become faulty.'

3. 'I can no longer find fault in anyone, my son. Formerly people's faults appeared to my eyes also. Then with tears I prayed to the Master, "Master I can no longer bear finding fault." Then only this defect left me. Even if you commit so much as a little fault after doing a thousand good to somebody, he will be at once offended. People only look for faults. One should look for merits as well.'

4. 'I cannot see other's faults. I am simply not made that way. There are enough people always ready to criticize others. Surely the world will not come to an end if I refrain from doing so.'

5. 'Man finds faults in other after bringing down his own mind to that level. Does anything ever happen to another if you enumerate his faults? It only injures you. This has been my attitude. Hence, I cannot see anybody's fault. If a man does a trifle for me. I try to remember him even for that. To see the faults of others! One should never do it. I never do so. Forgiveness is Tapasya.'

6. 'Everyone has to be accommodating. The Master used to say 'sha,sha,sa. (Master emphasize thrice the need of forbearance.) Forbear everything. He is there to judge. '

7. 'One shouldn't lose oneself so much in sputtering. If one sees the worst of everything, one feels pain. X- has got into such a habit of speaking out the truth that she no long cares about what others will think. I, on the other hand, still care. One should never indulge in unpleasant truths.'

8. 'One must live carefully. Every action produces its results. It is not good to use harsh words towards others or be responsible for their suffering.'

9. 'Should anyone ever utter a thing that hurts another's feelings? An unpleasant truth, though true, must not be uttered. For that grows into a habit. By indulging in rude words, one's nature becomes rude. One's sensitivity is lost if one has no control over one's speech. At once a man casts all consideration for others to the winds, he stops at nothing. The Master would say, "If you have to ask a lame man how he became lame, then you have to speak thus: 'How did your leg come to such a condition?"'

10. 'If one is without kindness, how can one be called a human being?

11. 'Let me tell you how to love all equally. Do not demand anything of those you love. If you make demands, some will give you more and some less. In that case you will love more those who give you more and less those who give you less. Thus, love will not be the same for all. You will not be able to love all impartially.'

12. When the head of an ashrama requested the Mother to tell the workers under him to obey him implicitly in all matters, she firmly rejected his request and explained to him gently, 'The boys have become Sadhus to call on God and make their lives blessed. They are doing their best for the ashrama, and will always do so. They are now of age, and have had their mind and intelligence fully developed. So, discriminating between good

and bad, and what is to their advantage or otherwise. If they want to lead an independent life, you are not to be an impediment in their path. And even if you obstruct them, nobody can live always subservient to another at the cost of his own convenience. If you find any difficulty in getting your work done, it is you who have to explain it to them tactfully. They have always been obedient to you and they will still remain so. Love can achieve anything. You can never make one obey you by force or by adopting a roundabout way.'

13. The cat, following its own nature, often stole food and the Mother would remark, 'To steel is its dharma. Who is there always to feed it lovingly?' One day a monastic attendant treated the cat roughly and dashed it against the earth. The Mother looked very sad. She said to the monk, 'Scold the cat, but do not beat it. Please feed it regularly and see that it does not go to any other house to steel food. Do not beat the cat. I dwell inside the cat too.'

14. 'My son, work to remove the suffering of the world.'

15. 'The purpose of one's life is fulfilled only when one is able to give joy to another.'

9.

Further Teachings

1. Disciple: 'Those who are obtaining your blessings are fortunate indeed. What will happen to people in the future?

Mother: 'What do you mean? Why won't they too succeed? God exists everywhere and at all times. The Master is always there. They will succeed through his grace. Are not People realizing God in other countries?

2. To someone who asked if there is any truth in image worship, Mother said, 'From time out of mind, innumerable people have worshipped image and thus attained spiritual knowledge. Can you deny this fact? The Master never cherished dogmatic views. Brahman exists everywhere. Prophets and Incarnations are born to show benighted humanity their way. They give different instructions to suit different temperaments. There are many ways to realize truth. So, all these instructions have their relative value. For instance, many birds are perched on the branches of a tree. They are different colors: white, black, red, yellow, and so on. Their sounds, too, are different. But when they sing, we say that the sounds are made by the birds. We do not designate one particular sound only as the sound of the birds, and refuse to acknowledge the other sounds as such. '

3. 'All teachers are one. The same power of God works through them all.'

4. 'Naren once said, "Mother everything is taking flight nowadays. I see everything flyaway." I said (here Mother laughed) "Well, see that you don't put me to flight as well." And Naren said, "But Mother, if I put you to flight, where shall I stand? Knowledge which sets at naught the lotus feet of the Guru is ignorance. Where can knowledge stand if it denies the sacred feet of the Guru?"

5. 'You should not doubt the words of your own teacher.'

6. 'One must have reverence for one's Guru. One's chance of salvation lies in one's reverence for him. Observe how the disciple of the Master revere him. Out of this reverence for him they revere not only all the members of his family, but even the cats from his home district!'

7. 'One may commit a fault while serving a great soul. It happens in this way: While he enjoys the privilege of such service, his egotism increases. He then wants to control, like a doll, the person he serves. He wants to boss the latter in everything-eating, sitting or rising. He loses the spirit of service. But why should it be so with those who serve their superiors, forgetting their own comforts and looking upon the latter's pleasure and pain as their own? And you are talking of the downfall of the attendants! Many great souls surround themselves with riches and splendor. This attracts many to come to them as attendants. Such attendants become intoxicated with the enjoyment of their own ruin. Tell me how many there are who can render service in the proper spirit? You see, the reflection of the moon falls on the water of the lake. At this the small minnows jump about in ecstatic joy, thinking that the moon reflected in the water is really one of them. But when the moon sets, they remain as before. After exhausting themselves in glee, they fall into a state of depression. They cannot understand what it is all about.'

8. 'Where is that competent student who can understand spiritual instruction? First of all, one should be fit; otherwise, the instructions prove futile.'

9. 'If the disciple is good, the Guru is benefited thereby.'

10. Disciple: 'Do those who give up their bodies in a state of unconsciousness attain to a higher spiritual state afterwards?'

Mother: "The thought that is uppermost in the mind before one loses consciousness determines the course of one's soul after death.'

11. 'Though one gets new body on account of desires, yet one does not completely lose spiritual consciousness if one has to one's credit merits from previous births.'

12. A devotee came to Mother one day and called her "Mother', to which she replied, 'Yes, my son.' The devotee then said, 'Mother, I called you "Mother" and you responded saying "Yes". What more fear need I have? Mother corrected him saying, 'No, my boy, don't you speak thus. "He who is diffident wins in the end."'

13. One day a disciple said to the Mother, 'Mother no bad ideas come to my mind.' With a start she stopped him and said, 'Don't say that. One must not say such a thing.'

14. 'One who speaks out at the proper time is a true friend. There is no use for sympathy at the wrong time.'

15. 'Everyone can break down some thing, but how many can build it up?'

16. 'The Master used to say that one should learn from the scriptures that God alone is real and the world illusory. Suppose I write to you a letter asking you to bring certain things for me. How long do you need the letter? So long as you do not know its contents. But when you have known the contents of the letter do you need it any longer? Then you will procure those things and come to me. On the other hand, what is the good of reading the letter day and night?'

17. 'In the opinion of worldly men, it is not proper to visit a holy place at an inauspicious time. It is true that one may put off such a pious intention, considering the impropriety of the time, but death does not

make any distinction of time. As none knows when death may come, one should carry out pious intentions whenever the opportunity presents itself, without waiting for a particular time.'

18. 'Whenever you go from one place to another, observe the things around you, and also keep yourself well informed about what happens in the place where you live. But keep your lips shut.'

19. 'It is essential but one should work. It is through work alone that one may break asunder the bonds of Karma; only then is one free from desires. One shouldn't be without work even for a single moment.'

20. 'New devotees should be given the privilege of service in the shrine room. Their new zeal makes them serve the Lord carefully. The other are tired of service. Service, in the real sense of the word, is not a joke. One should be extremely careful about making His service perfectly flawless. But the truth is, God knows our foolishness and therefore He forgives us.'

21. 'One must work in the shrine room with great attention. Offering and the rest should be made in proper time.'

22. 'I want people here who are careful in work. There are those who perform great deeds on the spur of the moment. But a man can be really known from the interest he shows in the details of each duty.'

23. After someone finished her sweeping work and threw the broom into a corner. Mother said, 'How strange, my dear! The work is finished, and you throw it away carelessly. It takes almost the same time to keep it slowly and carefully as to throw it away. Should you despise a thing just because it is insignificant? "Him that you save, saves you in turn." Won't you need it again? Besides, this thing too forms a part of our household. From that point of view also it deserves some consideration. You must give each some consideration. You must give each one his due share of

honor. Even a broom must be shown some honor. The smallest work must be done with reverence.'

24. One day the pet cat was lying on one side of the courtyard. A devotee was caressing it with her foot. Gradually she placed her foot on its head. At this the Mother said to her, 'Oh my child, what are you doing? The head is he place of the Guru. One should not touch the head with the foot. Salute the cat.'

25. 'Is the value of a thing to be gauged by its price? It is the love and devotion with which a thing is offered that really counts.'

26. A beggar arrived and began to cry for alms. The monks were annoyed and scolded him, 'Go away, don't bother us now. Mother heard this and said look at that! They have sent him away, just because they would have to leave their own work to bring him alms. Even this little thing they couldn't do! How lazy of them! They couldn't give a handful of alms to a beggar! Is it right to deprive a man of his just dues? Look at his vegetable peel - even this is the cow's due; one must place it before the cow.'

27. A man came with a basket of fruits. The fruits were meant for offering. He asked the monks what he should do with the basket. They told him to throw it out in the lane. Mother looked at the lane and said, 'Look there. They have asked him to throw away such a nice basket! It does not matter for them in the least. They are all monks and totally unattached. But we cannot allow such a waste. We could have utilized it at least for keeping the vegetable peelings.' She asked someone to fetch the basket and wash it. It was kept for some future use.

28. Regarding Asanas Mother said, 'Be a little careful about it. If you continue such exercises for a long time, the mind may be diverted to the

body. Again, if you give it up. It may affect your health. Therefore, you should exercise your discretion.'

29. 'Whatever you eat you must first dedicate to God; you should not take any other kind of food. The quality of your blood depends on the quality of the food you take. If you take consecrated food your blood and your mind will be purified; you will find strength. If your mind is pure, your faith and love will be pure.'

30. Disciple: 'Mother, we householders live in families with many relations. Sometimes it happens that while the food is being cooked; some members of the family partake of it; later on, that food is brought to me. I hesitate to offer that food to God.'

Mother: 'That is inevitable in the case of householders. We also have to face similar situations. Take an instance: there may be a sick person in the family. Part of the food may be kept aside for him. But when food is placed on the plate, remember the Master, think that he himself has given this food, and eat it. Then it will not have any injurious effect on the growth of devotion.'

31. 'Everyone should serve his mother. It is all the more incumbent upon you, because you have all come to me with the purpose of dedicating your life to the service of others. Always talk to her about God. You will really fulfill the duty of a son can help her to gather the means for her ultimate journey. You have grown by sucking her milk. How much suffering she has undergone to raise you to manhood! Know that service to her is your highest duty. But it is quite a different matter of she stands in the way of your spiritual life. Beware! Don't involve yourself in worldliness on the plea of serving your mother.'

32. Some women devotees came to see Mother one evening. One of them had a showiness about her with her dress and ornaments, and she was a little restless. Addressing them Mother said, 'Mark you, my dear, modesty is the greatest ornament of a woman, A flower best serves its purpose when it is offered to a deity; else it may as well wither on the plant. But it pains me greatly when the dandies take up flowers either in a bunch or singly, smell them with their nose a little, and say, 'How sweet the smell!' And, oh dear, the net moment they may throw these down on the floor or walk away crushing them under the shoes.'

33. Regarding controversy over social customs, Mother said, 'Don't let your mind be disturbed over these trivial details. That will make you forget the Master. Whatever people may say, remember the Master and do what you consider to be right.'

10.

Swami Vivekananda and the Ramakrishna Order

1. 'Naren is of divine origin and full of purity from his infancy, and about whom the Master mentioned that he was a rishi, a great sage. Though fully imbued with the spirit of renunciation and an all-embracing love, and immersed in the eternal joy of communion with the infinite, he has been suffering for the good of others. He was specially brought by the Master, for preaching his lofty ideals, for the elevating of the masses and for the good of humanity.'

2. 'He is in a class apart. '

3. 'Naren was like an unsheathed sword. After his return from foreign lands he said, "By your grace, Mother, I didn't have to cross the ocean by jumping in this age, but went to those parts in their own ships. And there, too, I noticed the glory of the Master. What a great number of good people have heard about him from me and accepted this idea with astonished eagerness."'

4. After Swami Vivekananda's first visit to the West, Holy Mother told him, 'The Master is always with you. You have many more things to accomplish for the welfare of the world.'

5. Swamiji: 'While I was alone in America, I felt that the Divine Power which the Master called "Mother" was guiding me.'

Mother: 'The Master is not different from the one whom he called "Mother". It was the Master who accomplished all this work through you. You are his chosen child and disciple. How dearly he loved you! He foretold that you would teach men.

6. When Swamiji said that he wanted to form a permanent organization to preach the message of the Master. Holy Mother replied, 'Do not worry. What you are doing now and what you will do in the future will be permanent. You are born just to accomplish this work. Thousands of people will hail you as a world teacher, a bestower of divine knowledge. I can assure you that the Master will fulfill your desire in no time. You will soon see that the work you want to undertake will be accomplished.'

7. 'Alas, how much did I weep and pray to the Master for my children! That is why you find everywhere ashramas and monasteries through his blessings. After the passing away of the Master his disciples renounced the world, found temporary shelter and for a few days lived together. Then one by one they went out independently and began to roam hither and thither. That made me very sad. I prayed to the Master, saying, "O Lord, you have been embodied in human form, and you spent the period of your earthly existence with a few disciples. Now has everything ended with your passing away? I have seen in Vrindavan and Banaras so many holy men living on alms and having the shade of trees for shelter. There is no lack of Sadhus of that type. I cannot bear to see my children, who have renounced all for your sake, wondering about for a morsel of food. It is my prayer, O Lord, that those who give up the world for your sake may not suffer for want of simple food and coarse clothing. It is also my prayer that my children should live together, clinging to you and your teachings, and people afflicted with the sufferings of the world should come to them and get peace of mind by hearing from them your words. That is why you incarnated yourself in a human form. My mind becomes restless, seeing my children roam about here and there." After that Naren started doing all this.'

8. 'Naren brought his own mother to the Math at the time of the Durga Puja. She roamed from one garden to another and picked chilies, eggplants

etc. She felt a little proud, thinking that it was all due to her son, Naren. Naren came to her and said, "What are doing there? Why do you not go and meet the Holy Mother? You are simply picking up these vegetables. Maybe you are thinking that your son has done all this work. No, mother. You are mistaken. It is He who has done all this. Naren is nothing." Naren meant that the Math was founded through the grace of Sri Ramakrishna. What great devotion!'

9. Swami Vivekananda once wrote a letter from America urging the monks of the Ramakrishna Order to renounce everything in the service of God and man. When the Mother heard this, she said, 'Naren is an instrument of the Master. It is the Master who writes through Naren about the future duties of his children and devotees for the good of the world. What he has written is all correct. You will see it bearing fruit in the course of time.'

10. A disciple told Mother that he could not practice meditation and prayer regularly on account of his being busy with the duties of the ashrama. Mother said in reply, 'Whose works are these? They all belong to Him.'

11. To a monk who wanted to go for Tapasya, Mother said, 'Why so, my child? You are now doing my work. You are devoting yourself to the Master's work. Are these in any way less spiritual than austerities? Why should you abandon these works?'

12. 'What will you do day and night if you are not engaged in work? Can one practice meditation and Japa for twenty-four hours? You referred to the Master. His case was different. Mathur used to supply him with proper diet. You are able to get your food because you are doing some work. Otherwise you would have to roam from door to door begging for a morsel of food. Perhaps you would fall ill. Besides, where are people today

to give alms to the Sadhus? Never pay any heed to such words. Things will go on as the Master directs. The Math will run on these lines. Those who cannot adjust themselves will go away.'

13. When the Mother visited the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service in Banaras and was asked what she thought of it she replied, 'I saw the Master himself present there, and that is why this work goes on here. These are all his work.'

14. 'To care for these homeless old ladies is to care for the Lord. What a fine work these boys (of the Ramakrishna Mission) have built up!'

15. 'All this is His wish. He knows best how He is getting His plan executed and through what. '

16. 'Love alone is the essential thing. Our organization is growing only through love. They are my children and have taken shelter with Sri Ramakrishna. Wherever they go the Master will look after them.'

11

Sri Ramakrishna

1. 'When I was at the music tower at Dakshineswar for serving the Master, I had to live in that small room with great difficulty. And into it, what a lot of things were packed. But no difficulty was too great when it was meant for some service to him. The days passed unnoticed in great delight.

2. 'His complexion was like the color of gold. His complexion blended with the color of the golden amulet which he wore on his arm. When I used to rub him with oil, I could clearly see a luster coming out of his entire body. When he would come out of his room in the temple, people used to stand in line and say to one another, "Ah, there he goes!" people would look at him wonder struck when he went with slow steady steps to the Ganges to take his bath.

'When he was at Kamrpukur, men and women looked at him with mouths agape whenever he chanced to come out of the house. One day as he went out for a walk in the direction of the canal known as "Bhutir Khal", the women looked at him agape and said, "There the Master goes!" Annoyed at this, Sri Ramakrishna said to Hriday, "Well, Hridu, please put a veil on my head at once."' '

'I never saw the Master sad. He was joyous in the company of everyone, were he a boy of five or a man of ripe old age. I never saw him morose, my child. Ah, what happy days those were!'

3. 'Ah! How kindly Sri Ramakrishna treated me! Not even one day did he utter a word to wound my feelings.'

4. 'I then felt as if a pitcher of bliss was kept in my heart. It was a constant experience with me then. It is a very difficult to convey an idea of this experience to others.'

5. 'What a unique man he was! How many minds he illumined! What unceasing bliss he radiated! Day and night his room echoed and re-echoed with laughter, stories, talk and music.

'The Master sang, and I would listen hour after hour, standing behind the screen of the Nahabat. When the singing was over, I saluted him with folded hands. What joyous days we Passed through! People poured in day and night, and there was no end of spiritual talk.'

6. 'How happy we were there! How many people of different temperaments used to come to him! Dakshineswar at that time appeared to us as the mart of bliss.'

7. What a great singer the Master was! His voice was so sweet. While singing he would be one with his song. His voice is still ringing in my ears. When I remember it, other voices appear so flat?'

8. 'I always saw a smile on his face in his ecstatic mood. I have seen him smile in all states of Samadhi.'

9. 'How fine his teachings are! How little we knew at that time that things would take this turn! What a great soul was born! How many people are being illumined by his worlds! He was the embodiment of Bliss itself. Often, he would give me nice words of advice. If I had known how to write, I would have noted them down.'

10. Disciple: 'Mother, that photograph of Sri Ramakrishna which you have is a very good one. Is it a good likeness of him?'

Mother: 'Yes, that picture is very, very good. I kept it with the pictures of other gods and goddesses and worshipped it. At that time, I lived on the ground floor of the Nahabat. One day the Master came there and at the sight of the picture he said, "Hallo, what is all this" 'Then I saw the Master take in his hand the bel leaves and flowers kept there for worship, and offer them to the photograph. He worshipped the picture.'

11. 'The Master said to me, "You will see how in course of time I will be worshipped in every house. You will see everyone accepting this (meaning himself). This is surely going to happen. "This was the only day I heard him using the first personal pronoun with reference to himself. Usually he would speak of himself not as "I" or "me" but as "case" or as "belonging to this", pointing to his body.'

12. 'The Master entered into spiritual trance very often. One day, as he came down from a long Samadhi, he said, "Listen, my dear, I went to a land where the people are all white. Ah! How sincere is their devotion?"'

13. 'One day Hazra said to the Master, "Why do you constantly long for Narendra and other youngsters? They are quite happy by themselves eating, drinking and playing. You had better fix your mind on God. Why should you be attached to them?" At these words, the Master took his mind away from the young disciples completely and merged it in the thought of God. Instantaneously he entered into Samadhi; his beard and hair stood straight on end. Just imagine what kind of a man the Master was! His body became hard like a statue. Ramlal, who was attending on Him, said repeatedly, "Please be your former self again." At last the mind came down to the normal state. It was only out of compassion for people that he kept his mind on the material plan.'

14. 'You will gain everything if you but take refuge in the Master. Renunciation alone was his splendor. We utter his name and eat and

enjoy things because he renounced all. People think that his devotees also must be very great, as he was a man of such complete renunciation.'

'Ah me! One day he went to my room in the Nahabat. He had no spices in his small bag. He used to chew them now and then. I gave him some to chew there, and also handed over to him a few packed in paper to take to his room. He proceeded; but instead of going to his room, he went straight to the embankment of the Ganges. He did not see the way, nor was he conscious of it. He was repeating, "Mother, shall I drown myself!" Hridhay ran to the Master, caught hold of him, and brought him back to his room. A moment more and he would have dropped into the Ganges. Because I put a few spices in his hand, he could not find his way. A holy man must not lay things by His renunciation was hundred percent complete.'

15. 'It never occurred to me that he practiced all the religions with the express motive of preaching the idea of spiritual harmony. He was always in his mood of divine ecstasy. He practices all the methods through which the Christians, Mohammedans, Vaishnavas, and others worship God and realize truth, and thereby he tasted God's disports in diverse ways. Days and nights passed by him without any notice. But what you should note, my dear, is that renunciation is his special message in this age. Did anyone see such natural renunciation any time before? As for the harmony of religions you speak of, that also is true. In previous incarnations, some one of the attitudes was magnified at the cost of all others.'

16. 'All the acts of Sri Ramakrishna were directed to God alone. That was the nature of his teaching.'

17. 'If you can but follow one of the Master's teachings, you get everything.'

18. 'Our Master was a man of direct perception. He saw everything; he knew everything. His words are the words of the Veda. What will you do if you do not believe in his words?'

19. 'I don't know anything. I repeat only what I have heard from the Master. Read "The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna" and you will know all you need.'

20. 'The Kathamrita (The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna) by M. is very nice. This is because he has put down the exact words of the Master. How sweet are those words!'

21. Holy Mother wrote to M.: 'My beloved child, the words you heard from the Master are true. You need not be afraid to publish them. It was the Master who left these words in your keeping. Now he is bringing them out according to the needs of the time. You should know that people's spiritual consciousness will not be awakened unless these words see the light of day. His words which are in your keeping are true, every one of them. When you read them to me, I felt as if he himself was speaking.'

22. 'How devoted the Master was to truth! Alas, we cannot follow his example. The Master used to say that truth alone is tapasya in the Kali Yuga. One attains God by sticking to truth.'

23. 'In these miserable times one may find god only through steadfast truth. The Master used to say, "He who clings to truth, lies in the lap of God."'

24. 'My child, is the Master a part? He is the complete whole. Besides Brahman, there is nothing else in this world. Everything that appears before us is the manifestation of Brahman. It is His power which is present in all gods and goddesses. He it is who is the 'Purusha' and he

again is the 'Prakriti.' The Master did not come to upset the old principles.'

25. 'He is the Supreme God and the Supreme Goddess. He is the essence of all Mantras, the embodiment of all deities, and dwells in all creatures. One can worship all the gods and goddesses in and through him.'

26. To one who doubted if it was right for him to profess himself a member of the Advaita Ashrama when he learned towards dualism, the Mother said, 'Sri Ramakrishna was all Advaita and preached Advaita. Why should you not also follow Advaita? All his disciples are Advaitins.'

27. 'Do not make any distinction between the Master and me. Meditate on your Ishta and pray to Him. The meditation begins from the heart and ends in the head. Neither Mantra nor scripture is of any avail; Bhakti, love, accomplishes everything. The Master is everything - both guru and Ishta. He is all in all.'

28. Disciple: 'I do not have any such desire to see a four-handed deity and the like. I am quite satisfied with what we have.'

Mother: 'That is also the case with me. What shall we gain by these Supernatural visions? For us the Master exists- and he is everything.'

29. Disciple: 'Does the Master really live in the picture?'

Mother: 'Of course, He does. The body and the shadow are the same. And what is his picture but his shadow?'

Disciple: 'Does he live in all the pictures?'

Mother: 'Yes, if you pray to him constantly before his picture, then he manifests himself through that picture. The place where the picture is kept is a shrine. The Master will pay special attention to such a place.'

30. 'The birthplace of the Master is a sacred place, a seat of his constant presence, and a holy resort for pilgrims.'

31. 'At the Cossipore Garden the Master spent the last days of his life. The place is associated with so much meditation, Samadhi, and the practice of austerities. It is the place where the Master entered into Mahasamadhi. It is a place permeated with intense spiritual vibration. One realizes God-consciousness by meditating there.'

32. Regarding the method of consecrating food the Mother said, 'look here, my dear, consider the Master as your very own and say, "Come, sit, take, eat." And you should think that he has come, is seated, and is eating. What need is there of Mantras and such formalities with regard to one's own? Those things are like the courtesies and considerations one has to show when one's friends and acquaintances come on a visit; for one's own, no such thing is necessary. He will accept your gift whatsoever way you may offer it.'

33. 'What else is spiritual life besides praying to the Master, repeating his name and contemplating him? And the Master? What is there after all about him? He is our own eternally.'

34. 'He is mother, father, friend, relative, acquaintance, my nearest and dearest, and everything.'

35. 'Always think of the Master as your own.'

36. 'Pray to the Master. He will do everything for you. He is your own, as the moon is the uncle of all children.'

37. 'The Master is the basis of all that we are. He is the ideal. You will never take a false step if you hold onto him under all circumstances.'

38. 'Always remember that Sri Ramakrishna alone is our protector. If you forget this, you will find yourself in a maze.'

39. Devotee: 'Mother, If I pray to the Master silently, will be listen? And should I say anything to the Master without letting you know first?'

Mother grew somewhat agitated on hearing this and said, 'If he be true, certainly he will hear you.'

40. 'Dreams regarding the Master are real, but the forbade his disciple to narrate, even to him, dreams regarding himself.'

41. 'A disciple wrote to the Mother a letter full of despair. After hearing the contents of the letter, she said seriously and forcibly, 'How is that possible? Is the name of the Master a mere trifle? Those who come here and think of the Master will certainly see their Chosen Ideal one day. If they are not able to do so during their lifetime, they will at least have His vision at the moment before their death.'

42. Devotee: 'It is said that one realizes God by praying to Him sincerely for two or three days. I have been praying for such a long time, but why do I not get any realization?'

Mother: 'Everything will come in time, my child. The words of Sri Ramakrishna can never be in vain. Be devoted to him and take shelter at his feet. It is enough to remember that there is some One, call Him father or mother, who is always protecting you.'

43. Disciple: 'Mother we do not know what the Master was like. We have not seen him. So, for us you are the Master and everything else.'

Mother: 'Don't fear, my child. The Master will look after you. He will watch over you here and hereafter. He will protect you always.'

44. 'Lay the burden of your mind before Sri Ramakrishna. Tell him your sorrows with your tears. You will find that he will fill your hands with the desired objects.'

45. 'Keep a picture of the Master before you, and know for certain that he is always with you. Open your grief-stricken heart to him. Shed tears and sincerely pray, "O Lord, draw me towards you, give me peace of mind." By doing so constantly you will gradually attain peace of mind. Have devotion for the Master, and whenever you are in distress, speak it out to him.'

46. "Sri Ramakrishna was a perfect soul. Certainly, one can be freed from sin by confessing it to one like him.'

47. 'Whoever seeks refuge with the Master finds everything.'

48. 'He used to say, "One who remembers me never suffers from want of food or from other physical privations." By remembering him one gets rid of all sufferings.'

49. 'Those who pray to him will easily gain love and knowledge of Brahman.'

50. 'The path of Brahman is very difficult. Pray to the Master and he will give you the knowledge of Brahman in proper time.'

51. 'The easiest and best way of solving the problems of life is to take the Name of God, of Sri Ramakrishna, in silence.'

52. 'The Master was born on earth this time to liberate all, the rich and the poor, the learned and the illiterate. The Malaya breeze is blowing here. He who will unfurl his sail and take refuge in the Master will be blessed indeed.'

12

Reflections on Herself

1. 'When the Master departed from this life, I felt like going away too. He appeared before me and said, "No, you must remain. There is so much yet to be done." In the end I too understood how much there was to be done. He used to say, "The people of Calcutta are squirming like worms in the dark. Take care of them."'

2. 'The Master regarded all creatures as manifestations of the Divine Mother. He left me behind to manifest the motherhood of God.'

3. Suppose one of my children has smeared himself with dirt. It is I, and no one else, who shall have to wash him clean and take in my arms. To make mistakes is man's very nature; but few of those who criticize know how to correct them.'

4. 'My child, several among those who come here are up to anything in life. No type of sin has been left undone by them. But when they come here and address me as Mother, I forget everything and they get more than they deserve.'

5. 'I can't contain my self when one draws near me and calls me Mother.'

6. Girish Ghosh once asked Holy Mother, 'What sort of Mother are you?' At once she replied, 'Your real Mother; not just he wife of your Guru, not an adopted mother, not a vague mother. Your real Mother.'

7. A disciple asked Holy Mother, 'Are you the Mother of all?' 'Yes,' she replied. 'Even of these lower creatures?' he pressed. 'Yes,' answered the Mother.

8. 'My boy, they (the foreigners) too are my children. Can I afford to be partial?'

9. 'Balaram Basu used to refer to me as the "great ascetic, the embodiment of forbearance." Can you call him a man who is devoid of compassion? He is a veritable beast. Sometime I forget myself in compassion. Then I do not remember who I am.'

10. 'My son, if so, much as a thorn pricks one of you, a sword enters my heart!'

11. 'He is unfortunate indeed who does not gain my compassion. I do not know anyone, not even an insect, for whom I do not feel compassion.'

12. 'Do you think that even if this body passes away, I can have any release unless every one of those whose responsibility I have taken on myself is out of bondage? I must constantly live with them. I have taken complete charge of everything, good or bad, regarding them. Is it a trifle to give initiation? What a tremendous responsibility have we to accept! "How much anxiety have we to suffer for them! Just see! Your father is dead, and that at once made me feel worried about you. I thought, "How is it that the Master is again putting him to test?" That you may come out of this ordeal is my constant prayer. For this reason, I gave you all this advice. Can you understand everything I say? If you could do so, that would lighten my worries to a great extent. I cannot simply set aside those whom I have accepted as my own.'

13. 'To a mother a son is always a son.'

14. A devotee who had come seeking initiation was prevented from seeing the Mother according to Swami Saradananda's instructions, based on her continuous suffering from malaria. At this she said firmly, 'What has Sarat to say? That's why we have come. I shall initiate him.'

15. 'Whatever I have to give, I have given at the time of initiation. If you want peace immediately, practice the spiritual discipline prescribed. Otherwise you will achieve it only after the fall of the body.'

16. To an attendant who noticed Mother doing Japa late at night in her bed, Mother said, 'What can I do, my son? The boys come and entreat me eagerly. They take the Mantra and go home. But nobody does any Japa regularly. Some don't do it even once. Yet as I have shouldered the burden, should I not look after them? That's why I do Japa and pray to the Master, "O Master, grant them enlightenment, grant them emancipation, and do take on yourself their care in every way here and hereafter."'

17. 'I entrust all the responsibility to the Master and to him I pray every day," Do please look after everyone of them, wherever they may be." And mind you, these Mantras have all come from the Master '- he gave them to me and they are of proved efficacy.'

18. "The Master is sending these (candidates). I am nobody. It is the Master who graciously blesses them. I am only his instrument'

19. 'Mark you, I haven't given you the Mantra; it is the Master who has done so.''

20. A disciple who had developed mental aberration returned his rosary to the Mother. When a monk asked her whether he had returned the Mantra also, she replied, can that ever be? It a living Mantra. Can there be any giving back of it - the Mantra that one has once received, the great Mantra that it is? If one has but once a love for his Guru, can he ever be despoiled of it?'

21. To a newly initiated disciple Mother said, 'From now on the Master will take care of you. He is yours and you are His. He is your Guru, your

Ishta. I have offered your life at his feet.' But how am I to think of you, Mother?' the disciple asked. She paused for a while and said, 'Well, think of me as one with him (meaning Sri Ramakrishna).'

22. 'He is here in this body in a subtle form. The Master himself declared, "I shall live within you in a subtle form."'

23. Disciple: 'Does the Master appear to you always; does he eat from your hand even now?'

Mother: 'Are we distinct?'

24. 'My son, the devotees say that in me the Master alone is present.'

25. 'He who is the Master, am I.'

26. When a disciple asked why she wept like an ordinary person at the death of her young nephew, Mother replied, 'I live as a householder. I must taste the fruit of the tree of the world. That is why I weep. Sri Ramakrishna once remarked, "When God is incarnated in a human body, He acts exactly like a man. He feels the same hunger, thirst, sickness, grief and fear as others do. Even Brahman weeps when caught in the trap of the five elements."'

27. Mother remarked, regarding the apparent attachments in her life, 'The Master kept my mind bound down by all these things for the sake of his work. Otherwise could it have been possible for me to stay on after he left'

28. 'People come to me and say, "I have no peace in life, I never feel the presence of God, tell me how to find peace," and so on. Then I look at them and at myself and wonder why they talk in this manner. Is everything about me beyond the common run? I have never known unrest.

And as far as the presence of God, it is mine for the taking. I can see Him whenever I like. '

29. 'I do not remember having committed any sin since my very birth. I touched the Master at the age of five. I might not have understood him at that time, but he undoubtedly touched me. Day and night my mind want to soar high. I force it down, out of compassion for people.'

30. Disciple: 'Do you ever remember your real nature?'

Mother: 'Yes, I recall it now and then. At that time, I say to myself, "What is this that I am doing? What is all this about?" Then I remember the house, buildings and children and forget my real self.'

31. 'God loves to sport as a human being.'

32. 'Sri Krishna played with the shepherd boys, laughed and walked with them; ate of the food they had touched; but they know who He was?'

33. 'It is only by accepting an illusion that I am so. This is nothing but continuing in the midst of an illusion.'

34. Disciple: 'Well, Mother, do you always remember your real nature?'

Mother: 'How could that be? How, then, could I perform all these duties? But even in the midst of my activities, whenever I wish I can understand by the slightest effort that all this is the mere play of Mahamaya.'

35. 'I tell you, my daughter, know this body (pointing to her own) to be divine.'

36. Disciple: 'X- says that one should not stay near one's Guru for long; for he says that at the sight of the common worldly dealings of the Guru the disciple often loses much of his love and respect.'

Mother (with a laugh): 'Don't you lose heart, my son, at such talks. In that case how will my work be carried on? Off with such great ideas as divinity; think of me as a human being, and go on doing the work just as at present, following my direction and using your intelligence. Have no fear whatsoever.'

37. 'The excessive manifestation of divinity creates fear in the minds of devotees; they cannot feel intimate.'

38. One morning Holy Mother was assisting in husking paddy. It was almost her daily job. A disciple asked her, 'Mother why should you work so hard?' 'My child,' she said in reply, 'I have done much more that is necessary to make my life a model'

39. When one day a disciple protested about her strenuous life, Mother said, 'My child, it is good to be active.' Remaining silent for a few minutes she said gravely, 'Please bless me that I may serve others as long as I live.'

40. When her devotees protested against the many personal services, she rendered them, Mother silence them by saying with overflowing feeling, 'What after all have, I done for you? Am I not your mother? Is it not the privilege of a mother to serve her child in every way-even to clean its dirt with her own hand?'

41. 'Now that you are with your mother, what's the need of so much Japa and meditation? I, indeed, am doing everything for you. Now eat and live merrily, free from all care.'

42. Disciple: 'Mother, you have hundreds of children, and I am only one of them. But to me you are my only mother. Bless me so that I may be a worthy child of yours.'

Mother: 'Well my child, surely the Master will look after you. It is for your good that he has brought you here. Always think of the Master as your own. Think of me as your own mother and depend on us in all matters.'

43. 'Do not fear, my child. Always remember that the Master is behind you. I am also with you. As long as you remember me, your mother, why should you be frightened? The Master said to me, "In the end I shall certainly liberate those who come to you."'

44. 'Whoever has come here, whoever is my son is already redeemed. Destiny dare not throw my children into hell. Free yourself from all anxiety by entrusting your future to me. And remember this always, that there is one behind you who will come to you at the right moment and lead you to the everlasting domain.'

45. 'I am mother of the wicked, as I am the mother of the virtuous. Never fear. Whenever you are in distress, just say to yourself, "I have a mother."'

46. Amjad, a Muslim bandit, build the wall for Holy Mother's new house. One day she invited him for a meal, which was arranged on the porch of her house. Nalini began to throw the food at Amjad's plate from a distance. Mother notice this and said, 'How can one enjoy food if it is offered with such scorn? Let me wait on him properly.' After he had finished his meal, Mother cleaned the place with her own hands. Nalini shrieked, 'Aunt, you have lost your caste!' 'Keep quiet,' said Mother. 'As Sarat (Swami Saradananda) is my son, exactly so is Amjad.'

47. When a woman who had led a bad life went to Mother in a mood of sincere repentance and made an unreserved confession of her sins, Mother embraced her with great warmth of feeling, saying, 'Don't despair for

whatever you have done. You will get over all your sinful tendencies. Come, I shall initiate you. Lay everything at the Master's feet, and cast away all fear.'

48. A college student used to visit Mother's place quite frequently. One day, while taking leave of her he suddenly said, 'Mother, I am no good for this place; I am unfit to come to you. I am saying goodbye forever!' He quickly left the house. Mother ran after him, caught his shirt, and pulling him toward her she put her hands on his shoulders. Looking at him eye to eye she said in a firm voice, 'Whenever any disturbing thought comes to your mind, think of me. Don't worry! With those words she let him go while going home the boy repeated Mother's words over and over again: "Think of me; think of me; think of me." He couldn't forget those two beautiful compassionate eyes of the Mother. Constantly he thought of those eyes of the Mother and those words, "Think of me. (He became a monk later on and led a very exemplary life. He narrated this incident to a brother monk who is presently a senior member of the Ramakrishna Order.)